CLAIMS

1. A digital video tape recorder operable to record successive slant tracks, each comprising a number of sectors, on a tape medium, in which, across a group of one or more slant tracks:

at least one independently writeable sector stores primarily video material;

at least one independently writeable sector stores primarily audio material; and

at least one independently writeable sector stores metadata associated with the audio and/or video material, the metadata including at least a material identifier and other data relating to the material.

2. A recorder according to claim 1, in which each slant track recorded by the recorder comprises:

at least one independently writeable sector stores primarily video material;

at least one independently writeable sector stores primarily audio material; and

at least one independently writeable sector stores metadata associated with the audio and/or video material, the metadata including at least a material identifier and other data relating to the material.

3. A recorder according to claim 1 or claim 2, in which the independently writeable sector(s) storing metadata have a predetermined data capacity per slant track.

4. A recorder according to claim 1 or claim 2, in which the recorder is operable to vary the extent of the metadata sector(s) in response to the amount of metadata associated with each time segment of the video and/or audio material.

5. A recorder according to claim 4, comprising means for recording control data onto the tape indicating the extent of the metadata sector(s) of at least each slant track carrying one or more metadata sectors.

6. A recorder according to claim 5, in which the control data is recorded at a position on the tape so that, in a normal replay direction, the control data relating to a slant track is recovered from the tape before the head traverses a metadata sector of that slant track.

7. A recorder according to any one of the preceding claims, the recorder being arranged to record four concurrent audio channels on the tape medium.

8. A tape format of successive slant tracks, each comprising a number of sectors, in which, across a group of one or more slant tracks:

at least one independently writeable sector stores primarily video material;

at least one independently writeable sector stores primarily audio material; and

at least one independently writeable sector stores metadata associated with the audio and/or video material, the metadata including at least a material identifier and other data relating to the material.

9. A tape medium having recorded thereon successive slant tracks, each comprising a number of sectors, in which, across a group of one or more slant tracks:

at least one independently writeable sector stores primarily video material;

at least one independently writeable sector stores primarily audio material; and

at least one independently writeable sector stores metadata associated with the audio and/or video material, the metadata including at least a material identifier and other data relating to the material.

10. An editing apparatus for use with a tape medium according to claim 9, the apparatus comprising means for reading, modifying and rewriting metadata stored in the metadata sector(s) of the slant tracks independently of the audio and video material stored in the audio and video sectors of the slant tracks.

11. A method of recording video material, audio material and associated metadata onto a tape medium, the method comprising the step of recording successive slant tracks, each comprising a number of sectors, in which, across a group of one or more slant tracks:

at least one independently writeable sector stores primarily video material;

at least one independently writeable sector stores primarily audio material; and at least one independently writeable sector stores metadata associated with the audio and/or video material, the metadata including at least a material identifier and other data relating to the material.

12. A method of editing a tape medium according to claim 9, the method comprising the steps of reading, modifying and rewriting metadata stored in the metadata sector(s) of the slant tracks independently of the audio and video material stored in the audio and video sectors of the slant tracks.

13. A video recorder operable to record video and audio material together with a timecode having a plurality of user-definable data bits;

the video recorder being operable to store a material identifying code in a subset of the user-definable bits of the timecode so that each instance of the material identifying code extends over the timecode user bits corresponding to an ordered sequence of more than one frame of the video material, the recorder also recording in a further subset of the user-definable bits of the timecode for each frame a sequence position indicator, indicative of the position of the current frame in the ordered sequence.

14. A video recorder according to claim 13, the recorder being a tape recorder operable to record video and audio material in successive slant tracks and at least one linear track on a tape medium, the linear track storing a linear track timecode having a plurality of user-definable data bits.

15. A video recorder according to claim 14, in which the material identifying code and the sequence position indicator are stored in respective subsets of the user-definable bits of the linear track timecode.

16. A video recorder according to any one of claims13 to 15, in which the material identifying code is a code which uniquely defines the material amongst other material items stored on the same medium.

17. A video recorder according to claim 16, in which the material identifying code is an SMPTE UMID.

18. A recording medium format for recording video and audio material together with a timecode having a plurality of user-definable data bits; a subset of the user-definable data bits of the timecode storing a material identifying code so that each instance of the material identifying code extends over the timecode user bits corresponding to an ordered sequence of more than one frame of the video material, a further subset of the user-definable bits of the timecode for each frame storing a sequence position indicator, indicative of the position of the current frame in the ordered sequence.

19. A recording medium having recorded thereon video and audio material together with a timecode having a plurality of user-definable data bits; a subset of the user-definable data bits of the timecode storing a material identifying code so that each instance of the material identifying code extends over the timecode user bits corresponding to an ordered sequence of more than one frame of the video material, a further subset of the user-definable bits of the timecode for each frame storing a sequence position indicator, indicative of the position of the current frame in the ordered sequence.

20. A video recording method in which video and audio material together with a timecode having a plurality of user-definable data bits are recorded on a recording medium; the method comprising the steps of:

recording a material identifying code in a subset of the user-definable bits of the timecode so that each instance of the material identifying code extends over the timecode user bits corresponding to an ordered sequence of more than one frame of the video material; and

recording in a further subset of the user-definable bits of the timecode for each frame a sequence position indicator, indicative of the position of the current frame in the ordered sequence.

21. A tape recorder substantially as hereinbefore described with reference to the accompanying drawings.

22. A tape format substantially as hereinbefore described with reference to the accompanying drawings.

23. A recording medium substantially as hereinbefore described with reference to the accompanying drawings.

24. A recording method substantially as hereinbefore described with reference to the accompanying drawings.

25. Editing apparatus substantially as hereinbefore described with reference to the accompanying drawings.

26. An editing method substantially as hereinbefore described with reference to the accompanying drawings.

27. A video recorder substantially as hereinbefore described with reference to the accompanying drawings.

28. Computer software for carrying out a method according to any one of claims 11, 12, 20, 24 or 26.

29. A providing medium by which software according to claim 28 is provided.

30. A medium according to claim 29, the medium being a storage medium.

31. A medium according to claim 29, the medium being a transmission medium.